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THE FULBRIGHT REVOLT

STATINTL

THE struggle between the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the White House over Vietnam and foreign aid is only the latest battle in a war as old as the Republic. Conflict between the executive and legislative branches of the government is inherent in the system of checks and balances built into the United States Constitution. The founding fathers feared unrestrained power wielded by either the executive or the legislature; trusting neither, they set up a system of government which can only function smoothly when there is complete trust between the two branches of government, or when one completely dominates the other. The result has been a conflict, never finally resolved, over the division of power; and nowhere has this been more evident than in the field of foreign affairs.

Perhaps the most authoritative interpretation of the constitutional provisions on the conduct of foreign affairs is Hamilton's statement, in Number 75 of *The Federalist*, that the treaty-making power

will be found to partake more of the legislative than of the executive character, although it does not seem strictly to fall within the definition of either of them. . . . The history of human conduct does not warrant that exalted opinion of human virtue which would make it wise in a nation to commit interests of so delicate and momentous a kind, as those which concern its intercourse with the rest of the world, to the sole disposal of a magistrate created and circumstanced as would be a President of the United States.

Washington on occasion came in person to the Senate to seek its "advice and consent"—in the words of the Constitution—bringing Cabinet members with him to answer questions. But Washington's successors did not follow the example he set in dealing with the Senate directly; had they done so, it is possible that something like the British parliamentary system might have developed in the conduct of foreign affairs. The last attempt to

revive the formal dialogue between President and Senate failed in 1813, when Madison declined an invitation from the Senate to join it in a discussion of foreign affairs.

The establishment of the Foreign Relations Committee in 1816 represented, at least in part, an attempt to bridge this gap in communications between the President and the Senate. But so little did the attempt succeed that Woodrow Wilson could write in 1884 that:

If the President wishes some more satisfactory mode of communication with the Senate than formal message-writing, his only door of approach is this Committee on Foreign Relations. . . . But such a mode of conference is . . . almost as distinctly dealing with a foreign power as were the negotiations preceding the proposed treaty.

This is certainly an accurate description of Wilson's own dealings with the committee thirty-five years later.

As the normal channel of communication between the White House and the Senate on questions affecting this country's international relations, and the Senate's agent in examining them, the Foreign Relations Committee has always had a position of considerable potential power. The extent to which that power has been realized has, however, varied greatly in different periods. It has been affected by the nature of the issues at any given time, by the personalities and attitudes of Presidents and committee chairmen, and above all by the political relations between the executive and legislative branches. Thus, for example, the committee's power has usually been greater when the President and the majority of the Senate were of different parties, and it has also tended to increase when an administration's foreign policies were unsuccessful, or its popular support was waning.

In general, the committee enjoyed its greatest run of influence in the years between the end of the Civil War and the beginning of the New Deal. Under the chairmanship of Charles Sumner, a man of distinguished scholarship and—even rarer in the post-Civil War era—complete integrity, it helped win the consent of a reluctant Senate to the purchase of Alaska, and blocked Grant's

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treaty for the annexation of the Dominican Republic. In the last decade of the century, by contrast, the committee, under the influence of Henry Cabot Lodge, played a major part in setting the United States on the course of empire. Then, after the First World War, when the country was again faced with a major decision as to its future course, the Foreign Relations Committee under Lodge (who was now its chairman) again played a decisive role—this time in helping to keep the United States out of the League of Nations. Lodge's successor, William E. Borah, had before becoming chairman shared leadership of the fight against the League; he had also been largely responsible for the Washington naval disarmament conference of 1922. As chairman he prevented U.S. accession to the World Court; at the same time, he had much to do with producing the London naval disarmament conference of 1930 and the Kellogg-Briand Pact to outlaw war. He was also able to force the Coolidge administration to reach a peaceful settlement with Mexico over the nationalization of oil owned by U.S. firms there, despite Secretary of State Kellogg's charge that Mexico was the center of Bolshevik activities in the Western hemisphere. And his long fight for the recognition of the Soviet Union helped to pave the way for the Roosevelt administration's action on that question.

YET despite the significant role played by the Foreign Relations Committee and the Senate as a whole on certain matters and at particular moments, the influence of the executive was from the beginning predominant and grew more so as the country's international activities expanded. (A parallel development occurred in domestic matters, as government grew more complex.) Indeed, throughout American history many of the country's most important acts of foreign policy have bypassed the Senate through executive agreements or unilateral acts or declarations by the President or Secretary of State. These include the Monroe Doctrine, which was simply part of a Presidential message to Congress; Lincoln's warning to Napoleon III to withdraw his troops from Mexico; the Open Door policy in regard to China; the Stimson doctrine; and Franklin Roosevelt's destroyers-for-bases deal—to mention only a few. They also include almost all instances of United States political and military intervention in the internal affairs of other nations, whether overt or of the type represented by Theodore Roosevelt's Panamanian adventure and the activities of the CIA.

To be sure, executive agreements and unilateral declarations are only binding on succeeding administrations if they choose to adhere to them, and they are not binding on Congress at all. (The courts, however, do apply them in the absence of contrary laws or treaties.) Thus, we have long since scrapped the part of the Monroe Doctrine

which pledged us to keep out of the conflicts of the Eastern Hemisphere. But the difference in this respect from treaties is less than it might seem; the latter do indeed bind Congress and succeeding administrations—except when it is more convenient to disregard them.

Franklin Roosevelt was certainly one of the stronger Presidents, and under him the relative importance of the executive branch increased in every field, with a concomitant decline in the power of the Foreign Relations Committee. But the influence of the committee was also diminished in that period by weaknesses of personnel. Its chairman from 1933 to 1940 was Senator Key Pittman of Nevada, whose primary interest at home and abroad was to "do something for silver." Opposition to the administration's foreign policy tended to express itself on the Senate floor rather than through the committee; such leading critics of the administration as Senators Burton K. Wheeler and Robert A. Taft were not committee members.

In the war and postwar periods, the committee's relatively minor role also reflected the wide public agreement on most aspects of foreign policy. This real unity was reinforced by the persistence of the wartime attitude that "politics stops at the water's edge." Arthur Vandenberg's close cooperation with the Truman administration was reciprocated by the Democrats under Eisenhower, and the role the Senate and of the committee itself was limited by the attitude of the Democratic floor leader, Lyndon B. Johnson, whose own scanty background in international affairs led him to defer to the administration's superior expertise in that field.

BECAUSE J. William Fulbright of Arkansas enjoyed long experience in foreign affairs and had definite ideas in that field, and because he had been critical of the Eisenhower administration's rigidity, a change in the role of the Foreign Relations Committee might have been expected to be accomplished when he became its chairman in 1959. Yet though Fulbright questioned some diplomatic appointments, and actively but unsuccessfully fought the designation of Ogden Reid as ambassador to Israel, he soon came to accept Majority Leader Johnson's policy of supporting the administration. Looking back in April of 1961, he declared that while the Johnson policy

may have been wrong with respect to particular issues and events, it was basically right as a proper long-term procedure because failure to support the President, particularly a weak one, and particularly at a time of divided government, easily could have led to political warfare between the parties over foreign policy.

Moreover, Fulbright soon developed a very restrictive theory of the role of the committee and the Senate itself in the field of foreign affairs. In the same speech he said:

It seems clear to me that in foreign affairs, a Senate cannot initiate or force large events, or substitute its judgment of them for that of the President, without seriously jeopardizing the ability of the nation to act consistently, and also without confusing the image and purpose of this nation in the eyes of others.

Other chairmen had accepted a minor role for the Senate and the committee in practice, but it is doubtful that any had ever made the abdication so explicit.

As late as July 1963, Fulbright was still speaking of "the infeasibility of consultation in an emergency" and asserting that in

major areas of foreign policy, those relating more to long-term problems than to immediate crises. . . . Presidential power is incommensurate with Presidential responsibility as a result of the diffusion of power between executive and legislative branches and within the latter. . . . Public opinion must be educated and led if it is to bolster a wise and effective foreign policy. This is pre-eminently a task for Presidential leadership because the Presidential office is the only one under our constitutional system that constitutes a forum for education and political leadership on a national scale. Accordingly, I think we must contemplate the further enhancement of Presidential authority on a national scale.

By May 1964—Johnson having succeeded Kennedy in the White House—Fulbright's views had changed to the point where he felt that:

A proper and important part of the congressional role in foreign policy is to take the lead in what ought to be a continuing national discussion and examination of the posture of the United States in the world, of our basic national interests, and of ways and means of advancing those interests.

Nevertheless, Fulbright continued to believe that:

A vital distinction must be made between offering broad policy directions, and interfering in the conduct of policy by the executive branch. Many of our difficulties in foreign policy arise . . . from a recurring tendency on the part of Congress to overstep its proper role.

In accordance with that extremely limited conception of the role of Congress, Fulbright saw his function as primarily that of conducting a public discussion of general principles, and privately consulting with the State Department and the President on immediate problems. This attitude was reflected in the way he organized the committee. The subcommittees established to deal with the problems of specific areas were described as "consultative" and were intended only to serve as channels of communication with the appropriate officials in the State Department. They were

not permitted to hold hearings without specific authorization from the chairman or the full committee. (This contrasted with the situation in such committees as Judiciary and Government Operations, where subcommittees have frequently been more active and influential than the parent bodies.) And the committee employed only a small staff, appropriate to the limited function Fulbright envisaged for it.

In this period, even so, the effect of the committee on foreign policy was probably more limited than Fulbright actually wanted it to be. It seems questionable whether the Senator's general discussions of broad policy issues made much impression on either the executive branch or the public. Thus, he repeatedly warned of the danger of attempting to impose our system on others, and of relying on power for the achievement of ends which it cannot accomplish, citing historical parallels to point the moral. (Echoes of Thucydides continually recur in Fulbright's speeches.) But presented as abstractions, the warnings drew little attention. Only when they were issued in the specific context of American policy in Vietnam and the Dominican Republic did they become headline news.

As for private consultation, it may have had some effect under the Eisenhower and Kennedy administrations. Eisenhower was cautious in the use of power, and he had a great respect for Congress; Kennedy understood the limitations of power as well as its uses, and he had a great respect for ideas. Yet to his own subsequent regret, Kennedy rejected Fulbright's advice on the Bay of Pigs invasion in favor of that of his military and intelligence advisers. It would certainly have been difficult to raise the question of that invasion in the Senate or the Foreign Relations Committee while there was still time to stop it, and it might have been ineffective. But it would not have involved any breach of security; the preparations for the invasion were no secret either to Castro or to people who read the newspapers.

WHAT seems finally to have changed Fulbright's mind as to the proper role of the Foreign Relations Committee was the aftermath of last year's U.S. intervention in the Dominican Republic. The committee conducted hearings on the situation, taking testimony in executive session, as it had done after the Bay of Pigs. On the basis of this testimony, Fulbright decided that the U.S. action had been wrong in principle, wrong in the way it was carried out, and based on inaccurate information.

He presented his conclusions in a speech on the floor of the Senate on September 15. In accordance with the doctrine of constitutional monarchies that "the King can do no wrong," Fulbright absolved President Johnson of any personal blame, but condemned those who had given the President inaccurate information and bad advice. But

it was the President's own statements to which Fulbright referred in discussing what he euphemistically termed the government's "lack of candor."

Fulbright does not seem to have planned to carry the matter any further. But to his apparent surprise, he found himself in the center of a storm. In private, he was the target of snubs (such as omission from the guest list at White House receptions for foreign statesmen) and of carefully leaked denunciations to the press. In public, he was accused of making "irresponsible" charges and he found himself at something of a disadvantage because the secrecy of the hearings prevented him from citing the official testimony on which he had based his conclusions. Most of his critics, however, had not discussed the substance of his speech but had instead berated him for publicly questioning administration policy.

He responded to the attacks by defending the right of dissent in general terms and making it clear that he now felt it a duty to exercise this right:

In the case of the Dominican crisis, I felt that, however reluctant I might be to criticize the administration—and I was very reluctant—it was nonetheless my responsibility to do so, for two principal reasons.

First, I believe that the Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Relations has a special obligation to offer the best advice he can in matters of foreign policy; it is an obligation, I believe, which is inherent in the chairmanship, which takes precedence over party loyalty, and which has nothing to do with whether the Chairman's views are solicited or desired by people in the executive branch.

Second, I thought it my responsibility to comment on United States policy in the Dominican Republic because the political opposition, whose function it is to criticize, was simply not doing so. It did not because it obviously approved of United States intervention in the Dominican Republic and presumably, had it been in office, would have done the same thing. The result of this peculiar situation was that a highly controversial policy was being carried out without controversy—without debate, without review, without that necessary calling to account which is a vital part of the democratic process. Again and again, in the weeks following the Committee hearing, I noticed the absence of any challenge to statements appearing in the press and elsewhere which clearly contradicted evidence available to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

Where Fulbright had once defended Lyndon Johnson's support of the Eisenhower foreign policies on the ground that such a course was necessary for national unity, he now declared that:

Insofar as it represents a genuine reconciliation of differences, a consensus is a fine thing; insofar as it represents the concealment of dif-

ferences, it is a miscarriage of democratic procedure. I think we Americans tend to put too high a value on unanimity—on bipartisanship in foreign policy, on politics stopping at the water's edge, on turning a single face to the world—as if there were something dangerous and illegitimate about honest differences of opinion honestly expressed by honest men.

The President's reaction to the Dominican Republic speech almost compelled Fulbright to adopt a new conception of the committee's role; the old one was no longer tenable. The possibility of influencing the President's policies through quiet diplomacy was largely foreclosed by the latter's rupture of diplomatic relations. At the same time, it had become obvious that testimony taken in executive hearings did not furnish an adequate basis for a committee effort to inaugurate a genuine debate on foreign policy.

IT WAS in the Vietnam hearings that Fulbright began putting his new conception in practice. For the first time in many years, the Foreign Relations Committee made itself the focus of a great public debate on a major issue confronting the country. The witnesses were predominantly drawn from official ranks, although they also included George F. Kennan and General James Gavin, both of whom had been critical of official policy. But official witnesses were confronted with material drawn from a variety of independent sources, and were closely examined on the meaning and justification of government statements.

The "experiment in public education," as Fulbright called it, was successful enough to encourage the committee to hold public hearings on China policy and NATO, as well as others on the Foreign Economic Assistance and Military Assistance authorization bills. The foreign-aid hearings became in large part an extension of the discussion of Vietnam. The committee is now considering further hearings on Vietnam, in the hope of obtaining additional light from expert witnesses on points not adequately illumined by the testimony so far. Thus, Senator Wayne Morse of Oregon is especially anxious to go into the legal background of American intervention in Vietnam. (On this question, Secretary Rusk's repeated citations of President Eisenhower's letter to Ngo Dinh Diem and the SEATO treaty as justifications for American intervention have not satisfied even some members who in general support the administration's policy. At one of the foreign-aid hearings, Senator Clifford Case of New Jersey commented on the Secretary's contention: "Secretary Rusk is no dope; why does he keep on saying this?") Similarly, Senator Albert Gore of Tennessee is anxious to have the committee obtain further information on the nature of the National Liberation Front and the support it receives. He is dissatisfied with the State Department's ready equation of the NLF with the South Vietnamese

Communists, the Communists with Hanoi, and Hanoi with Peking; he is also disquieted over the emphasis in the communiqués on the "body count" of "Communists" killed. At one hearing which was not televised or well-reported (because there were no star witnesses), he remarked: "As I read the papers each day and see news on radio and television and hear how many Communists we have killed each day, I wonder . . . how many of those who are killed are, in fact, actually Communists." Several other committee members share Gore's disquiet on these points (Senator Claiborne Pell of Rhode Island quotes a French officer's definition: "What is a Vietminh? A Vietminh is a dead Vietnamese"). And Fulbright himself has repeatedly voiced his dismay over the moral effects of the war, and at the pride expressed by Secretary McNamara and others in this country's power of destruction.

Fulbright's doubts on Vietnam are shared in varying degrees by Morse, Mansfield, Gore, Church, Clark, Pell, and McCarthy among the Democratic members of the committee, and Aiken among the Republicans. Their attitudes range from Morse's unreserved and long-standing condemnation of American intervention (which has made him the only committee member to vote against appropriations for the war) to the quiet distress of Mansfield and Aiken, expressed in the report they submitted to the President in December 1965 after returning from an extended trip to Southeast Asia.

The attitudes of the other members range from Case's qualified endorsement of the administration position, through the faithful support of every administration statement by Sparkman and McGee, to Hickenlooper's inclination toward expanded bombing of North Vietnam. Sometimes it is a little difficult to tell the precise nuances of a Senator's position on the war. While Senator John Williams of Delaware certainly supports its continuation, for example, his questioning of witnesses is almost entirely confined to the problems of waste and corruption, matters which are his primary interest in both domestic and foreign affairs. There can be no doubt that the situation in Vietnam affords ample scope for inquiry of this type.

The general tone of a committee is normally set by the chairman, but he needs the support of a majority of the members in order to function effectively. Fulbright undoubtedly has that support in the new course on which he has set the Foreign Relations Committee in the past year. ("Until the last few years," according to Senator Aiken, "the committee seldom had a quorum. Now it is seldom without a quorum.") Indeed, one can detect a feeling akin to liberation among many committee members. Several—including Gore, Pell, Church, and Aiken—have stated, in almost identical words, that the committee is at last performing its full constitutional function to

advise and consent in matters of foreign policy. They also believe, as Pell puts it, that the hearings "have slowed down the escalation a bit," and have "made the middle of the road position more acceptable." In addition to that, as Church says, "The first changes, however limited and cautious, that have come along in years in our relations with China, followed so closely on the public hearings as to make it clear that the State Department was influenced by the preponderant weight of testimony."

THE public reaction to the Vietnam and China hearings encouraged the committee to take a more vigorous approach to other issues as well. One example was its renewed pressure for more effective congressional control of the CIA. This pressure, of course, was reinforced by the discovery that the CIA had planted "faculty members" on the staff of a Michigan State University project in Vietnam, and that it was involved in the activities of East European emigré organizations in the U.S., despite the fact that it was theoretically excluded from activities within the country. (The latter fact had long been widely known, but became official when the CIA intervened in a libel case by filing an affidavit that the defendant had been acting under its orders when he accused the plaintiff of being a Soviet agent.) But the committee had already begun to move before these revelations, because it felt that the CIA was playing a large and growing role in the formation as well as the execution of foreign policy. Mansfield in particular had long been worried about the CIA's freedom from normal congressional controls, and had unsuccessfully sought to place it under more effective supervision. More recently, Eugene McCarthy had been especially active in pressing for the establishment of an effective legislative watchdog group. Other members also became increasingly concerned; one aspect of the CIA's activities that worried some was the presence of CIA agents in the guise of members of the staffs of U.S. embassies and aid missions, which placed all U.S. diplomatic representatives under suspicion.

Fulbright, hoping to avoid an open struggle, tried to negotiate the addition of senior members of the Foreign Relations Committee to the small group from the Armed Services and Appropriations committees that officially exercises legislative oversight—some would say in more senses than one—on the CIA's activities. But Senator Richard Russell of Georgia, chairman of the Armed Services Committee, rejected this proposal in language which appeared to challenge the trustworthiness of the senior members of the Foreign Relations Committee. The committee responded by taking up a resolution (proposed by McCarthy) to accomplish the same purpose.

The opponents of the McCarthy resolution on the committee fought a delaying action through

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several executive sessions, but by the time the resolution came to a vote, opposition had been so eroded that it was approved 14 to 5. The majority included the votes not only of those who supported the chairman on Vietnam and the Dominican Republic, but of Sparkman, McGee, and even Dodd on the Democratic side, and Case and Williams on the Republican. (One factor in the vote of Williams was doubtless a well-founded fear that the United States was not getting anything of value for a good deal of money the CIA was spending.) The pressure for more effective supervision of the CIA was also intensified, while the McCarthy resolution was under consideration, by the publication in *Foreign Affairs* of an article by a CIA analyst, which gave no indication of the author's connection with the agency. (The unusual thing was that the analyst in question was an overt employee of the CIA. The views of college professors, journalists, emigré politicians, and similar persons covertly or indirectly working for the CIA never bear a label to indicate that fact.) But perhaps the most important reason for the lopsided vote was the implied insult to the committee in Russell's statement; the members closed ranks in the face of an outside attack.

This type of solidarity is one of the sources of strength of every committee, and of the Senate itself. Enshrined in the institution of "senatorial courtesy," it serves as an important check on the ability of a President to use patronage as an instrument of reward and punishment; it also sometimes serves to permit Senators effectively to nullify national policy. (Thus it gives the Senators from Mississippi a veto over federal judicial appointments in that state.) The same kind of solidarity overrides differences on particular issues, because Senators know that the opponent of today may be the ally of tomorrow.

Normally, this solidarity also causes the Senate to follow the recommendations of its committees on most questions. In the case of the CIA, however, the Senate was called on to adjudicate a clash between the Foreign Relations Committee on one side and the Appropriations and especially the Armed Services Committees on the other. Technically, it avoided the issue by voting to send the resolution to the Armed Services Committee for further consideration. This again followed custom; the Senate seldom rejects a committee chairman's request that a measure be referred to his committee for consideration. Where the McCarthy resolution was concerned, though, the effect was to bury it.

How effective has the Foreign Relations Committee actually been since Fulbright steered it onto its new course? Its major contribution has been to public understanding, rather than to official policy. The escalation of the war in Vietnam may indeed have been slowed down by the committee hearings and the public reaction to

them, but it has continued, and the administration has taken an increasingly adamant position against a compromise settlement. The attempt to impose some measure of control on the operations of the CIA has, for the present, failed. The administration's receptivity to committee advice has not notably increased; indeed, the committee has been kept in the dark as to major policy developments in its sphere. Thus, although months of negotiations preceded the administration's decision to authorize the shipment of jet bombers to Israel—a major change of policy, since the government had previously refused to send purely offensive weapons to the Middle East—the committee was not informed. (But the Armed Services Committee—that is, Russell—was.)

The reaction of Fulbright and his committee has been to strike back at the administration by imposing numerous restrictions on the foreign aid program and cutting its size. Some of the specific restrictions—for example, limitations on military aid, especially to Latin American and African countries—have been in line with positions long held by such members of the committee as Fulbright and Morse. Others, like the cuts in overall authorizations for economic aid, and the increase in interest on development loans, are more in line with the philosophy of such committee members as Hickenlooper. Yet they have also received the support of members who have traditionally been in favor of a generous aid program. Similarly, Fulbright has now taken the lead in restricting the aid authorization to one year, where he had previously advocated a long-term authorization to permit more effective planning. He and some other committee members who share his general position have supported even further cuts and restrictions of the same type in votes on amendments offered on the Senate floor. (But some, like Clark, Mansfield, and McCarthy, have opposed these amendments.) Fulbright explains his reversal on the question of long-term authorizations by saying that

to judge from recent pronouncements by the President and his Secretary of State we are moving in the direction of a policy of "manifest destiny" for Asia. . . . If aid is just a tool and part of a new policy of manifest destiny in Asia, the Senate should very carefully consider this. I am not about to provide a tool to carry out this policy when I don't know what it is.

The explanation is a reasonable enough one for Fulbright's change of position on the term of authorization. But on some of the other restrictions—the cut in overall amount, the limitation of the number of countries which may receive development aid, and the increased rate of interest on development loans—the explanation is less persuasive. In essence Fulbright is saying that the administration has claimed that our economic aid to Vietnam has created an obligation to defend that country militarily; therefore we must restrict

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our aid in order to reduce our potential involvement in other Vietnams. But this point would seem to have been taken care of by the declaration, inserted by the committee in the authorization bill, that aid to a country did not involve any commitment to its defense. (In addition, Fulbright and a majority of the committee have for some years pressed for the channeling of an increasing amount of aid through international organizations rather than on a bilateral basis. They have felt that this would reduce the likelihood of U.S. political involvement; some members, such as Aiken, also argue that international organizations can exercise stricter supervision over the use of aid without arousing the resentment which such action by the United States would cause.) It would perhaps not be unfair to interpret the position of Fulbright and Morse as being that the present administration has shown a remarkable ability to misuse any power it has; therefore any restrictions imposed on its power—even its power to achieve apparently desirable ends—are all to the good. Or their motivation could be even simpler: a desire to demonstrate that if the Foreign

Relations Committee cannot force the administration to pay any attention to its advice, it can at least retaliate—even if irrelevantly—when that advice is disregarded.

PERHAPS such tactics are the only ones which will impress a President to whom all questions seem to resolve themselves into the single question of power. But they do not contribute to the development of a sound American foreign policy, or to the solution of the problems of the less developed nations of the world. To some extent, they may damage the committee's efforts to further the development of an intelligent public understanding of foreign policy. And if the conflict between committee and President is reduced simply to one of power, the latter has the final weapon—his ability, in Woodrow Wilson's words, "to get the country into such scrapes, so pledged in the view of the world to certain courses of action, that the Senate hesitates to bring about the appearance of dishonor which would follow its refusal to ratify the rash promises or support the indiscreet threats of the Department of State."